We need to bring our chemical industry to the desired level: V-P

Vice-President M Hamid Ansari during the chemical engineering congress at Law Auditorium in Panjab University on Saturday. (Source: Express photo by Kamleshwar Singh)

Highlighting the challenges confronting educational institutions in terms of outdated syllabus, lack of faculty and poor infrastructure, Vice-President and Chancellor of Panjab University (PU), Mohd Hamid Ansari, on Saturday said that it is important to make available to the students the best possible environment and required resources for education.

Ansari was delivering the inaugural address of the 67th annual session of the Chemical Engineering Congress (CHEMCON) at PU. He said that it is essential in to equip students with necessary tools and knowledge for their professional careers.

The four-day international conference is being organised on the theme, 'Chemical Engineering-Emerging dimensions and challenges ahead', by the Indian Institute of Chemical Engineers (IIChE) in collaboration with Dr S S Bhatnagar University Institute of Chemical Engineering and Technology (UICET), PU.

Quoting a Planning Commission paper, Hamid Ansari lauded

the role of chemical engineering and stated that the Indian chemical industry in 2010 had the size of $108 billion and accounted for approximately seven per cent of the Indian GDP, while the chemicals sector accounted for about 14 per cent in the over all index of industrial production. He informed that in terms of volume, India is the third largest producer of chemicals in Asia after China and Japan.

"Despite its large size and significant GDP contribution, the Indian chemical industry represents only around three per cent of global chemicals. This suggests that much more needs to be done to bring our chemical industry to the desired level in terms of size, technology and products, given our aspiration to emerge as a technology-driven manufacturing hub in the world," said Ansari. He also referred to the relevance of chemical engineering in scientific advances in diverse fields like genetic foods, smart materials, drug delivery systems, agro-based technology, biotechnology, microelectronics, nanotechnology and advanced materials.

PU Vice-Chancellor Professor Arun Kumar Grover in his address said that scientific meetings like CHEMCON and ICONSAT are important for the university as they provide avenues to sustain and improve its competitiveness among its national and international peer institutions. He stressed for more academia-industry interactions and collaborations with well-known research groups abroad.

Punjab Governor Shivraj V Patil, Haryana Governor Professor Kaptan Singh Solanki, Punjab Minister of Industries and Commerce Madan Mohan Mittal, National Organising Committee Chairman Professor G D Yadav, Local Organising Committee Chairman Professor S K Sharma, Indian Institute of Chemical Engineers president C V Murthy, and CHEMCON-2014 Organising Secretary Professor V K Rattan also spoke on

the occasion. Delegates from Japan, Canada, US, Singapore, South Africa and Iran also participated.
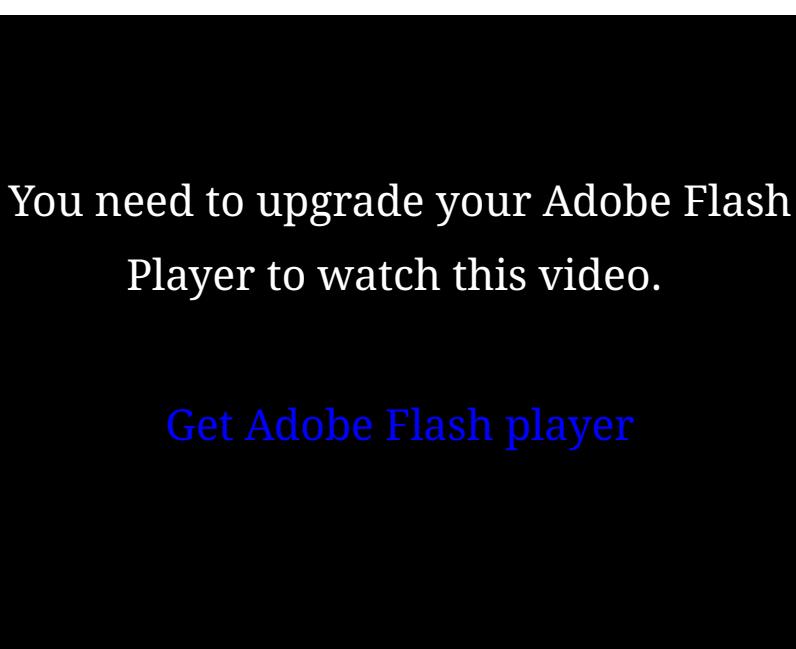
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